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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/683,417	12/24/2001	Denis J. Stemmler	F-428	2989

919 7590 04/13/2004

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EXAMINER

MILLER, WILLIAM L

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3677

DATE MAILED: 04/13/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/683,417	STEMMLE, DENIS J.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	William L. Miller	3677	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 12 January 2004.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 7-11, 14, 15 and 17-34 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 7-11, 14, 15, 17-25 and 28-33 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 26, 27 and 34 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 24 December 2001 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Claims 7-11, 14, 15, 17-25, and 28-33 remain withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected species, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Election was made **without** traverse in the response received 07-17-2003. (Note: Currently there are no generic claims.)

Drawings

2. The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the door (claims 26 and 34, and element 411 in the specification) must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

A proposed drawing correction or corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 26, 27, and 34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Webb (US#2004/0020978) in view of Whitehead (US#5920075).

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5. Regarding claim 26, Webb discloses a mailbox 10 for decontaminating mail comprising: a door 12 for allowing access to the interior of the mailbox; a decontamination system 20 operatively connected to a controller 30 for decontaminating mail; and at least one divider 28 for separating mail.

6. Although Webb discloses a manual start switch 34 used to send a decontamination start signal to the decontamination system, Webb fails to disclose a keyed start switch as claimed by the applicant. Whitehead discloses a decontamination device including a keyed start switch 60 in conjunction with a keypad 70 to send a decontamination start signal to a decontamination system 30. The keyed start switch and keypad cooperate to provide a safety feature allowing authorized use only. Therefore, as taught by Whitehead, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Webb by utilizing a keyed start switch in conjunction with a keypad to send a decontamination start signal to the decontamination system and thereby provide a safety feature allowing authorized use only.

7. Regarding claim 27, the controller includes a communication device, namely lamps 40, 42, and 44, for providing status information to a user.

8. Regarding claim 34, Webb discloses a decontaminating device including a decontaminating chamber 10 comprising: a door 12 for allowing access to the interior of the chamber; a decontamination system 20 operatively connected to a controller 30 for decontaminating mail; and at least one divider 28 for separating mail.

9. Although Webb discloses a manual start switch 34 used to send a decontamination start signal to the decontamination system, Webb fails to disclose a keyed start switch as claimed by the applicant. Whitehead discloses a decontamination device including a keyed start switch 60

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in conjunction with a keypad 70 to send a decontamination start signal to a decontamination system 30. The keyed start switch and keypad cooperate to provide a safety feature allowing authorized use only. Therefore, as taught by Whitehead, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Webb by utilizing a keyed start switch in conjunction with a keypad to send a decontamination start signal to the decontamination system and thereby provide a safety feature allowing authorized use only.

Response to Arguments

10. Applicant's arguments have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

11. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. See PTO-892.

12. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event,

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however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

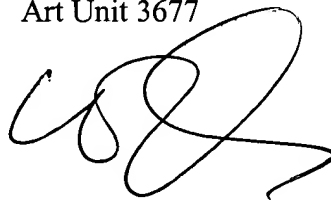
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to William L. Miller whose telephone number is 703 305 3978. The examiner can normally be reached on Tuesday-Thursday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, J. J. Swann can be reached on 703 306 4115. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

WLM
04-07-2004

William L. Miller
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3677

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'WLM', with a large, stylized loop at the end.